pt. 26 of 3 SCS

6/26/78 draft NF 581

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am replying to your recent letter enclosing correspondence which alleges that certain U.S. citizens are being held in Guyana against their will.

As part of the traditional and internationally sanctioned protection services, officers of the American Embassy in Georgetown, Guyana, periodically visit the Peoples Agricultural Temple located at Jonestown, Guyana. These officers have been free to move about the grounds and speak privately to any individuals, including persons who were believed by their family and friends to be held there against their will. It is the opinion of these officers, reinforced by conversations with local officials who deal with the Peoples Temple, that it is improbable anyone is being held in bondage. In general, the people appear healthy, adequately fed and housed and satisfied with their lives on what is a large farm. Many do hard, physical labor but there is no evidence of persons being forced to work beyond their capacity or against their will.

Should you have a specific individual about whom you want information, please provide the name of the person and the person's date and place of birth to the Office of Special

The Honorable
Dante B. Fascell, Chairman,
Subcommittee on International Operations,
Committee on International Relations,

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY _____ DATE _____
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE _____
TS AUTH. _____ REASON _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☐
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

House of Representatives.

Consular Services, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520. During the next visit to the Peoples Temply by an O<officer of the American Embassy, that officer will attempt to speak privately with the individual in question, convey your concern and report to you.

If you have further questions, please contact Mr. Rudolpy<h L. Rivera in our Office of Special Consular Services, telephone 632-9461.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.

Assistant Secretary

for Congressional Relations

Enclosures:

Correspondence returned.

CA/SCS/RLRivera/mrer
ext 23015 6/26/78
P96-0555

Clearances: SCS-Mr. Dobrenchuk
SCS-Miss Day
CA-Miss Watson
H-Mr. Krizek